

The
NATIVITY

A Christmas Service

ARRANGED BY
ROSAMOND KIMBALL

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SOUTHUMBERLAND'S YULE-TIDE, a fascinating and practical community Christmas masque, by C. Arthur Coan. This delightful festival is written in the spirit of the traditional Yule celebrations of olden days, and is so conceived as to permit the whole school or community, old, young, rich or poor, to take an active part. The costumes are fully described and the instructions are in detail. Suitable for community or school use. Price, 50 cents.

MOTHER GOOSE'S CHRISTMAS VISIT. An entirely new and original entertainment for children by Edith Thompson Langley. This very pleasing entertainment embraces most of the Mother Goose characters, and any number of children, boys and girls, young and old, can take part. Songs and specialties can be introduced and the action prolonged to any length of time desired. It introduces Santa Claus and the Christmas tree and all the favorite characters of the little ones. It is an admirable entertainment for the Christmas holidays, and is printed complete with music, suggestions for staging, costuming, etc. Plays about an hour. This entertainment has always been a great success wherever produced. Price, 30 cents.

THE GIFT. A symbolic play in one act by Marie A. Foley. The action passes in a simple room of a little house near Judea during the lifetime of Our Lord. The characters are two men, one woman and three children. The costumes—tunic draperies—make it easily possible to be played by an all female cast. Joel, a little lame boy, firmly believes the Galilean can cure him of his lameness if he will go and ask Him. In preparation the boy makes a wreath of white roses as a gift for the Galilean. Huldah, with whom Joel lives, a woman with neither heart nor imagination, ridicules the boy's faith, throws the wreath into the fire and frustrates the boy's going by leaving him in sole charge of her father, an aged and infirm man. A stranger, blind, also seeking the Galilean, to regain his sight, stops at the door for food and rest. The boy takes him in. Accidentally the stranger comes in contact with the charred wreath which Joel has dragged from the fire. The stranger hears about the wreath's purpose and offers to carry it to the Galilean. Joel explains its sorry plight. "The Galilean will understand," answers the stranger. "But it is black and ugly," exclaims the boy. "But not the heart that fashioned it," he is answered. The stranger then learns of the boy's desire to be cured and offers himself to remain there with the aged man while the boy goes to get his heart's desire. The boy accepts the stranger's great sacrifice (much to the disappointment of the old invalid) and leaves the house. However, in a few minutes the boy is back again crying out that he cannot go. "It is much worse being blind than being lame." The stranger is put upon the road by the boy to seek the Galilean. The boy watching him through the window sees the stranger meet with a Traveller, sees the giving of his burnt wreath to the Traveller, its transformation into beautiful crimson roses as it touches the Traveller's hands, then the return of the stranger no longer blind to the house. In his joy the boy leaps across the room to the door to find that his crutches have dropped to the floor and he has leaped across the room unaided—cured. The play ends with much joy for all three in the room while outside is heard the voice of the unbeliever, "Strange we missed Him; He must have passed this way." The stranger answers, "Yes, He passed this way." Price, 35 cents.

**SAMUEL FRENCH, Publisher, 25 West Forty-fifth St.
New York City**

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19 Dec. 27

THE NATIVITY

This Nativity Service is composed entirely of selections from the Bible, arranged in dramatic form on the plan of a mystery play, picturing the incidents of the gospel story of The Nativity and accompanied by Christmas Carols, adapted to easy production by young people. The Service has the threefold appeal—the Bible words, accompanied by music, with the actual scenes of the Nativity story. It is so arranged that it can be given within the church itself as a unique and wonderfully impressive Christmas Service.

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FOREWORD

One Sunday afternoon at Christmas time, a few years ago, a throng of children were hurrying toward a church. There were rich children and poor children, of many nationalities and of many creeds, all eagerly going in one direction that cold December day. Inside the church there was a stir of excitement, and a hundred eager eyes were fastened on the long curtain that concealed the pulpit platform.

As the lights were lowered and the choir began a chant, a hush fell upon the congregation—then the curtain parted and the Nativity Service began. In deepest reverence the congregation listened, stirred by an atmosphere of holiness so intense that it seemed as if the very gates of heaven had been flung open in that little church.

When the last scene came, showing the light shining out from the manger, one little child five years old slid down from his seat, saying, "I must go, mother."

"But it is not over," she whispered. "You cannot go."

"Mother, I *must* go," the child repeated. "I must go and look into the cradle, and see the gentle Jesus."

Another little boy a few years older, after eagerly telling about it when he reached home, concluded with these words: "Of course I knew that Jesus wasn't really there, but I would rather see that cradle with the light in it than all the Santa Clauses in the world!"

Since that Christmas, the Nativity service has been given in many churches, in settlements, and in a hospital. Each year the children flocked to see it in added numbers. Last Christmas a group of little ones not over four years old arrived at the church two hours before the festival began; they had walked two miles in the bitter cold to be in time to get seats in the front pew.

The following description of how the service was produced has been prepared in the hope that it may be of use to other churches in giving a Christmas festival that cannot fail to leave a deep and lasting impression in the hearts of all who see it.

THE CHARACTERS IN THE SERVICE

MARY—A young girl between 14 and 18 years of age.

JOSEPH—A tall boy between 14 and 18 years of age.

GABRIEL—A fairly tall young girl between 14 and 18 years of age with a musical speaking voice.

ZACHARIAS—A tall boy between 14 and 18 years of age.

THREE SHEPHERDS—Little children between 5 and 8 years of age.

THE ANGEL who gives the message to the Shepherds—A little girl about 7 or 8 years old with a clear, sweet voice.

THREE WISE MEN—Boys about 17 or 18 years old who can sing

THE HEAVENLY HOST—Fifteen to twenty children of various ages who can sing.

SCENES

- I. The Temple.
- II. The Annunciation.
- III. The Shepherds in the Field.
- IV. The Nativity.

THE NATIVITY

A CHRISTMAS SERVICE

ARRANGED BY ROSAMOND KIMBALL

The service opens with the singing by the congregation of "O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant," or some other Christmas hymn.

As the hymn closes, the lights are lowered, and the choir chants behind the curtain, Isaiah lii, 7-10: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace . . ."

THE TEMPLE

This scene follows closely the description of the sanctuary as given in Exodus, Leviticus, and Hebrews. The sanctuary contains the altar of incense in the centre, the table of shewbread on the right, and the seven-branched golden candlestick on the left (Hebrews ix, 2). Just back of the altar are the green screens that conceal the Nativity scene. A curtain of old gold or any other soft, rich color is hung over the screens to form an effective background.

The altar is represented by a small square table or box, over which gold lacquer paper has been pasted. On the altar is a brazier containing a few live coals, on these just enough incense is sprinkled to produce a thin cloud of smoke.

The seven-branched candlestick rests on a low table or stand covered with a white cloth on the left side of the altar (Exodus xxvi, 35). When the angel appears he speaks to Zacharias from behind the candlestick, which should, therefore, be of such a height that the lighted candles will come below the angel's head.

The shewbread, on the right of the altar, is placed on

another low table covered with a white cloth. Thick, round crackers are used to represent the shewbread. They are laid in two rows of six each (Leviticus xxiv, 5-6).

The action which is described in italics is to take place during the reading of the paragraph just preceding it. Thus, for example, when the reader says: "There was in the days of Herod," Zacharias enters and performs his service at the altar while the reading is in progress. Gabriel enters when the Reader says: "An Angel of the Lord."

Follow this policy throughout the service.

At the close of the chant the curtain parts and the reading begins.

READER. There was, in the days of Herod the king of Judæa, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, and they both were now well stricken in years. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. (*Zacharias enters, carrying incense on a brass platter. He goes to the altar, sprinkles some of the incense on the coals, places the platter at the base of the altar, and stands with his back to the congregation, his hands crossed on his breast and head bowed in prayer; then slowly raises his arms above his head and looks upward as the smoke of the incense ascends.*) And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. (*The angel quickly appears and stands behind the candlestick, with hand upraised, while he speaks.*) And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled and fear fell upon him. (*Zacharias draws back in awe.*) But the angel said unto him:

ANGEL. Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he

shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, and many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

ZACHARIAS. Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

ANGEL. I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak upon thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

(The curtain closes as Zacharias stands with bowed head before the angel.)

READER. And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could not speak unto them (*Zacharias steps out in front of the curtain and stands before the congregation with parted lips, as if eager to speak*) and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. (*He slowly raises his hand, in a gesture of wonder.*) And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house. (*He takes one step back behind the closed curtain.*)

The choir sings: "Draw nigh, Immanuel" (first and last stanzas). The curtain parts during the last stanza.

THE ANNUNCIATION

A prayer stand is placed on the left of the platform toward the back, and a tall vase of lilies at the right near the front. The curtain that was thrown over the screens in the background during the Temple Scene can be replaced by a dark blue one, or the screens can be left uncovered.

READER. And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her and said:

(Mary enters, pauses by the lilies, touches them and bends over to smell them, then passes over to the prayer stand, turns the leaves of the Bible, and becomes absorbed in reading. Suddenly the angel appears just back of the prayer stand. Mary, in wonder, takes a few steps backward.)

ANGEL. Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

READER. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her:

ANGEL. Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. For with God nothing shall be impossible.

(At the words "Son of the Highest"—Mary sinks upon one knee with her arms crossed upon her breast.)

MARY. Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. *(Mary bows her head.)*

READER. And the angel departed from her.

(As the angel departs Mary gazes after him in wonder, then rising, passes to the prayer stand and kneels in silent prayer while the choir chants the Magnificat (Luke i, 46-50). At the close of the chant the reading continues.)

READER. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda.

(Mary rises and leaves the room by the same way through which she entered.)

CURTAIN

The choir sings: "It came upon the midnight clear." During the singing of the last stanza the curtain parts.

THE SHEPHERDS IN THE FIELD

A camp fire—made by placing electric lights covered with red tissue paper in the midst of a few hemlock boughs—is in the foreground on the left. If the sides of the chancel have been decorated with Christmas greens and pine trees, this with the green screens and the lowered lights are all that is necessary to give a vivid suggestion of a field at night.

READER. And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David), to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife. And so it was that while they were there she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. *(The shepherds enter and seat themselves in a semi-circle on the ground at the left.)* And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them:

(At the words "Angel of the Lord"—The angel swiftly enters from the right, and stands with hand raised. The shepherds start to their feet and draw back a few steps in awe.)

ANGEL. Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For

unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

READER. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying: *(Many children in soft white robes enter swiftly from the right with both arms raised, their flowing sleeves giving the appearance of floating.)* The angels burst into the chant: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

(The angels softly pass out.)

READER. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another:

(The shepherds watch the departing angels in wonder and awe; then one turns to the others and speaks.)

SHEPHERD. Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

(The shepherds pick up their crooks and depart.)

CURTAIN

The choir sings: "O, little town of Bethlehem."

THE NATIVITY

The screens that have been concealing the Nativity scene are removed to show the manger scene. In the center back is a cradle or wooden box bound about with straw to represent a manger. The only light in the scene is shining out of the manger full upon Mary's face, as she is seated on the right bending over it. Joseph is standing just back of the manger. There are two boxes at the foot of the manger covered with rough draperies, and other draperies hang at the back of the scene. An electric star in the midst of pine or holly is placed above the scene, but is not lighted until the wise men appear. The curtain parts during the last stanza.

READER. And the shepherds came with haste (*The shepherds enter softly at the left and kneel close to the manger with hands clasped in prayer*) and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned (*The shepherds rise and slowly depart, looking back at the manger until they are out of sight.*) glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying:

WISE MEN. Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

(The wise men are standing in the aisle at the back of the church; they say this in unison.)

READER. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet: And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the King, they departed: (*At the word "departed" the wise men begin to walk slowly down the aisle, and the star appears*) and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

The organ strikes the opening chord, and the wise men begin to sing: "We three kings of Orient are." They should reach the steps leading to the pulpit platform at the close of the first verse. As they kneel on the steps the choir joins with them in singing the chorus: "O star of wonder, star of light!"

READER. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

The wise men remain kneeling until the reader comes to the word "gold"; then the king slowly rises, and ascending the steps, kneels in front of the manger and removes his crown, holding it above his head for a moment so that the congregation may plainly see his gift. He then places it on the ground before the manger and remains with his head bowed in silent prayer for a few seconds longer, then slowly rises and descends the steps, watching the babe all the time.

When he is again kneeling with the other two, the reader continues with the words, "and frankincense." The wise man having the censer now ascends the steps, and kneeling, swings the censer high above the manger, then places it beside the crown, and departs in the same way. When he is again kneeling with the others, the reader says, "and myrrh," and the last wise man presents a silver box, as the others presented their gifts. When he has descended the steps, the three remain kneeling together in worship as the reading continues. At the close of the passage they raise their arms in adoration, and bow low in oriental fashion, then rise and depart, passing down the other aisle from that by which they came. In leaving, they must keep their eyes on the manger and pause to look back at it as they pass slowly down the aisle.

When the Wise Men have left the church the choir sings: "Holy night, peaceful night." As the music begins, Joseph leaves the place where he has been standing, and seating himself at the foot of the manger, at the left,

rests his hand and arm upon the boxes and closes his eyes in sleep. Mary covers the babe with a bit of white drapery that has been hanging over the side of the manger, and continues to gaze into the manger.

READER. And when they were departed behold the Angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying:

(The angel passes in behind Joseph while he sleeps and bends over him as he speaks with hand upraised.)

ANGEL. Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child, to destroy him.

(As the angel departs, Joseph awakes. He sits rapt in thought, looking far out over the congregation, as if he were thinking deeply about the dream. Finally he turns to Mary and leans toward her over the manger. She responds as if she read his thoughts, and together they rise. They pass in front of the manger. Mary takes the babe in her arms, while Joseph stands close beside her with one arm outstretched protectingly.)

READER. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

(As the reader speaks, Mary and Joseph depart slowly, bearing the babe. The electric light, which represents the babe, is concealed by the draperies which are bound about it. She holds it in such a way that the light from it shines full on her face. When Joseph and Mary have departed the scene is left in darkness.)

If a shorter service is desired, the Temple and the Annunciation scenes can be omitted, thus having only the Shepherd and the Nativity scenes.

If the children are to act out the story of the birth of Jesus, the rehearsals, as well as the festival itself,

must be held in the deepest spirit of reverence. In order to maintain this spirit and also keep the spontaneity of it all, there should be only four or five rehearsals. The imaginations of the children can be stimulated to see and feel deeply the parts that they are taking. They respond quickly to the thought that it rests with them to create the right atmosphere for the service, and that, unless they themselves feel that deep spirit of reverence, the congregation will fail to be stirred by it.

Care must be taken to select for the principal parts the children who can throw themselves into it without self-consciousness. If any seem to lack the right spirit of reverence, others should be selected to take their places.

MUSIC

There should be soft music throughout the whole presentation; after each carol or chant the organ softly continues the refrain, until it swells again into the next carol. If the voices of any of the children who have speaking parts are not strong enough to be heard above the music, the organ should stop while they speak. It is most important that the one who is to read the Bible throughout the service should have a sympathetic voice, with good carrying power, as she must read behind the scenes and be heard above the organ music.

The Heavenly Host is the choir which sings the carols behind the scenes; they are only seen once when they appear to the Shepherds. If the two chants are too difficult for the children two or three older people can sing these.

"Draw Nigh Immanuel," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "We Three Kings of Orient Are," and "Holy Night, Peaceful Night," are found in *Old Christmas Carols* by S. Archer Gibson, Published by G. Schirmer, New York (10 cents a copy).

"It came upon the Midnight Clear" is in all church hymnals.

COSTUMES

Materials for nearly all the costumes can be found at home. Old curtains, draperies, scarfs, and shawls serve

better than new material to give the right sort of color combination.

The costumes of the angels are made by sewing two strips of white cheesecloth together, with pieces added for the flowing sleeves. The angels wear long gowns under the cheesecloth, and their hair hangs loose, with a band of gold paper bound about the brow. They have no wings.

Zacharias may wear a gown that combines the colors of blue, purple, and scarlet, with a blue robe draped over it, or he may wear white linen draped with blue. Blue and white are used for the turban, which is bound about with a gold band (Exodus xxxix, 1, 22, 30, 31).

Mary's costume is soft blue draped with white. In the Nativity scene white cheesecloth is draped over her head. Joseph may wear any dark color.

The shepherds wear little brown or dark blue tunics, with small fur rugs hung from one shoulder. Their feet are bound with strips of brown cloth to represent sandals. Their turbans are brown or blue. They carry shepherds' crooks.

The wise men are dressed in the richest and most regal costumes that can be had; but take care to keep a harmonious tone combination.

The costumes are made by fastening from the shoulder two strips of material that hang to the tops of the shoes, and are sewed together on the sides, with openings for the arms. Over the gown is fastened a long drapery, which flows from the shoulder out behind like a train. It is not necessary for all three to have trains. Silk scarfs make good turbans for the wise men. The king wears a gilt crown over his turban. Chains or other ornaments that add to the richness of the costumes are effective.

PROPERTIES

The seven-branched candlestick, the brazier and the censer can often be hired from a Russian brass shop. The incense can be bought at any store where church supplies are sold. A few pieces of red-hot charcoal placed in the brazier makes the best fuel on which to sprinkle the incense. Two red-hot coals are enough for the incense in the censer.

The light placed in the manger is a hand electric light. It must be strong enough to produce the right effect. The light should be tied to a small pillow, and the whole wrapped about with white linen or cheesecloth in the manner of an infant's dress. Great care must be taken to have the light itself entirely concealed by the cheesecloth, otherwise it may be seen when Mary lifts it from the manger.

A battery with a small electric light at the end of a long cord can be used for the star. The light is placed in a small box, one side of which has been cut in the shape of a star and covered with red tissue paper, through which the light shines. The box is fastened in the midst of some holly above the scene.

CURTAIN

WHY THE CHIMES RANG. A play in one act by Elizabeth McFadden. Adapted from the story of the same name by R. M. Alden. Especially recommended as a Christmas play because: It teaches the story of the Christ child, rather than the Byzantine legend of Santa Claus. It may be adapted to the ritual of *any* Christian denomination by slight changes of costume and setting. It offers a rare opportunity for exquisite church music. It may be given in the barest room, against a background of Christmas greens, or it may be presented with the most lavish equipment of a professional theatre, yet both productions will thrill the imagination and touch the heart. It teaches the beauty of a charity that gives heart and service as well as gold. Price, 35 cents.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY, dramatized by Virginia A. Griswold. This is the Bible story of the birth of the Christ, using the Bible language as far as possible. It lends itself to four scenes: The hill country of Judea, the throne-room of Herod, the marketplace in Bethlehem and the stable with the manger. It can be produced in the simplest manner on a platform, or with all the Oriental setting and accessories which the imagination and means can provide. Plays about an hour, and any number of people, adults and children, can be used. Makes an admirable Christmas entertainment and is well adapted for the use of churches and schools. Price, 35 cents.

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS. A Christmas play in three short acts by William Patterson Taylor. The NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS is a little play in three acts which may be produced well within an hour. The first act presents the wondrous and hurried night before Christmas preparation activities in Santa's workshop at the North Pole. The second act is a night before Christmas home bed-chamber incident, involving the desperate situation resulting from a childish difference between two brothers, which difference—"made up" true—introduces, also, the woeful possibilities of Santa's calamitous displeasure. (In this and the last act the children's classic, "The Night Before Christmas," is dramatized.) In the third act "All's well that ends well." A quartette supplies the music. This little play has *grown* during years of local use by the author and others. Its unbroken success in stirring and impressing the children (and the "grown-ups," too—whom, also, the author aimed to reach) was urged as a reason for its publication. Strongly recommended as an entertainment for the holiday season. Price, 30 cents.

A DREAM ON CHRISTMAS EVE. A very pleasing entertainment for little folks, by Ina Home. Time about thirty minutes, but it can be lengthened to any duration by the further introduction of each child's specialty. The costumes are according to the character represented and are easily made. The story is the dream of a little girl on Christmas eve, in which she views the good things which she is to receive on the morrow. Santa Claus enters and while filling the stocking tells a story of the little people to whom he gives his presents. Then the Christmas pudding enters and tells how she was made. Then the pumpkin pie, the holly, mistletoe, ice cream, crackers, candy, etc., enter and tell their stories. The play is easy to give and can be held in the class room, Sunday-school or a home. Price, 30 cents.

THE TOY SHOP. A new and original entertainment for children by F. S. Isham and Edward Weitzel, with some new and up-to-date music. No special number required. Particularly adapted to school or Sunday-school entertainments. One of the best entertainments for children published. Price 30 cents.

**SAMUEL FRENCH, Publisher, 25 West Forty-fifth St.
New York City**



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THE STAR IN THE EAST. Bible play in four acts by Anna Jane Harnwell. 9 males, 4 females. Plays a full evening. Biblical costumes. This four act drama is one of the prize plays resulting from the contest recently held by the Drama League of America in the hope of securing much needed Biblical scenes for use in the religious schools. A drama of the Book of Esther. It is written in blank verse, and adheres closely to the Bible narrative. Mordecai is the star role for a man, but the characters of Esther, Vashti and the King are almost equally good. The very beautiful and dramatic setting of the Old Testament story makes it quite as interesting as a secular production, though it is especially suitable for church or Sunday School use. Settings as simple or as elaborate as desired. Price 35 cents.

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